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Regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Economic Commission for Africa and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Summary

The present addendum to the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields contains information on the resolutions and decisions adopted or endorsed by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean at its thirty-seventh session, held in Havana from 7 to 11 May 2018; the Economic Commission for Africa at its fifty-first session, held in Addis Ababa from 11 to 15 May 2018; and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-fourth session, held in Bangkok from 11 to 16 May 2018. The full texts of the resolutions and decisions are available at www.regionalcommissions.org/our-work/regional-commissions-sessions-resolutions-and-decisions.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council

A. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

1. At its thirty-seventh session, held in Havana from 7 to 11 May 2018, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean adopted resolution 726 (XXXVII), on the basis of which the following draft resolution is submitted for action by the Economic and Social Council:

Draft resolution
Admission of French Guiana as an associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of resolution 726 (XXXVII) of 11 May 2018 of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, by which the Commission decided that French Guiana should be granted associate membership in the Commission,

Approves the granting to French Guiana of associate membership in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

B. Economic Commission for Africa

2. At its fifty-first session, held in Addis Ababa from 11 to 15 May 2018, the Economic Commission for Africa adopted resolutions 956 (LI) and 959 (LI) and decision A (LI), on the basis of which the following draft resolutions are submitted for action by the Economic and Social Council:

Draft resolution I
African Institute for Economic Development and Planning

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of resolution 956 (LI) of 15 May 2018 of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, by which the Conference endorsed the updated statute of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning,

Endorses the updated statute of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, as set out in the annex to the present resolution.

Annex

Statute of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning

Article I
Purpose and functions of the Institute

1. The primary purpose of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning shall be the specialist training of the officials of those services and institutions in Africa responsible for economic policy design and management, and development planning, monitoring and evaluation. Such training shall include appropriate supportive research activities. The Institute shall also organize workshops, seminars and policy dialogues of varied duration on practical problems

of national, regional and international development pertinent to its training mandate and the needs of African Governments.

2. The four core functions of the Institute shall be:

(a) To provide at its headquarters and at any other location in Africa training courses, encompassing short and postgraduate programmes, of varying duration on various aspects of economic policy design and management, and development planning, monitoring and evaluation;

(b) To organize in African countries, in cooperation with the appropriate national services, subregional and regional bodies and international specialized agencies, seminars and policy dialogues of varying duration on practical problems relating to national and continental economic management, development and planning;

(c) To provide advisory services at the request of Governments, doing so in close concert and collaboration with the relevant programme divisions of the Economic Commission for Africa, and insofar as its training programme allows;

(d) To establish and maintain documentation which will be made available throughout Africa in hard-copy and electronic formats to researchers, national institutions and subregional and regional organizations working in the field of economic planning and development.

3. In undertaking these four core functions, the Institute should take into account the paramount importance of promoting and safeguarding the economic independence of African countries.

Article II
Site of the Institute

1. The headquarters of the Institute shall be situated in Dakar, Senegal.

2. The host Government shall provide, in agreement with the United Nations, adequate premises, facilities and services as required for the efficient operation of the Institute.

Article III
Status and organization of the Institute

1. The Institute is and shall operate as a subsidiary body of the Economic Commission for Africa.

2. The Institute shall have its own governing council and budget. It shall be subject to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations [1] and the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations,[2] except as may be otherwise provided for by the General Assembly. It shall also be subject to all other administrative issuances of the Secretary-General, except as may be otherwise decided by him or her.

3. In addition, there shall be a technical advisory committee, a Director and supporting staff.

[1] ST/SGB/2013/4.
[2] ST/SGB/2017/1 and ST/SGB/2017/1/Corr.1.

Article IV
Governing Council

1. The Governing Council shall be the prime oversight and decision-making organ of the Institute, and shall act to give effect to the broad directions established for the work of the Institute by the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

2. The Governing Council shall be composed as follows:

(a) The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, who shall be the Chair of the Governing Council;

(b) Ten representatives of African Governments, two each from the five subregions of the continent (Central Africa, East Africa, North Africa, Southern Africa and West Africa);

(c) One representative of the Government of Senegal as host country;

(d) One representative of the African Union Commission;

(e) The Director of the Institute in an ex-officio capacity, who serves as the Secretary of the Governing Council.

3. The 10 members of the Governing Council who serve as representatives of African Governments shall be appointed by the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on the basis of equal representation of the five subregions of the African continent.

4. The 10 members of the Governing Council who serve as representatives of African Governments shall serve on a voluntary basis. Once the members are appointed, membership shall not be transferable or delegated except in circumstances envisaged under paragraph 7 of the present article.

5. The member of the Governing Council designated by the African Union Commission shall be recommended by the Chairperson of the Commission from among the elected officials of the Commission for appointment by the Conference.

6. All members appointed by the Conference from the five subregions of the African continent and the member appointed on the recommendation of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission shall serve for a period of three years and shall be eligible for reappointment for one additional term only.

7. Membership shall be based on the principle of continuity. When an African Government wishes to change its representative before the end of the term, the proposed change shall be communicated to the Chair of the Conference and the Chair of the Governing Council.

8. The Governing Council shall:

(a) Adopt general principles and policies governing the operations of the Institute, including the general conditions of admission to the Institute's programmes;

(b) Review and approve the annual work programme and budget of the Institute;

(c) Approve the courses offered by the Institute and the requirements for admission to them on the advice of the Technical Advisory Committee and the Director;

(d) Contribute to the determination of the type and nature of the certificates to be awarded at the end of the training courses offered by the Institute;

(e) Examine and approve the Director's annual report on the work and progress of the Institute, including the budgetary and financial report for the preceding year;

(f) Present an annual report on the work of the Institute, including a complete audited report in respect of all incomes and expenditures, to the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development at its annual session;

(g) Oversee the general administration of the Institute and make such recommendations as it may deem appropriate;

(h) Constitute a Technical Advisory Committee of 10 members to work with it and the Director of the Institute on the quality and relevance of programmes.

9. The Governing Council shall hold two ordinary sessions every year to adopt the budget and programme activities, review the management report and statement of accounts, approve the development of new programmes and ensure the good administration of the Institute. It may hold an extraordinary session at the request of the Chair or one third of its members. The Governing Council shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

Article V
Technical Advisory Committee

1. The Technical Advisory Committee shall be composed of:

(a) Ten representatives of African Governments, two each from the five subregions of the continent, as provided for in article IV, paragraph 2 (b);

(b) The Director of Economic Affairs at the African Union Commission;

(c) The Director of the Institute.

2. Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Governing Council on the recommendation of the Chair of the Governing Council and shall normally be requested to serve for at least three years at a time.

3. Members shall be appointed on a voluntary basis, in cognizance of their individual commitment and professional competences, and with regard to their experience in affairs connected with the work of the Institute.

4. The Director shall be the Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee.

5. The Technical Advisory Committee shall be responsible for giving technical advice with regard to the design of the training and related programmes and activities of the Institute. It shall do so with an eye to quality, relevance, timeliness, impact and sustainability.

6. The Technical Advisory Committee shall be convened at least once a year by its Chair. At its meeting, it shall formulate recommendations to be submitted to the Governing Council on the current and future work programme of the Institute. It shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

Article VI
Chair of the Governing Council

The Chair of the Council shall:

(a) Convene the Governing Council and propose its agenda;

(b) By delegation of authority from the Secretary-General, appoint the Director and other staff of the Institute;

(c) With the approval of the Governing Council, solicit and receive support for the work of the Institute from specialized agencies of the United Nations, intergovernmental agencies, African Governments, non-governmental organizations and other sources.

Article VII
Director

1. The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, through delegation of authority from the Secretary-General, shall appoint the Director of the Institute in accordance with the relevant United Nations rules and regulations. A search and selection committee established by the Chair of the Governing Council in consultation with the members shall propose suitable candidates for consideration.

2. The initial appointment of the Director shall be for three years, renewable for succeeding periods of three years, each subject to a satisfactory evaluation of the performance of the incumbent in accordance with established United Nations rules and procedures.

3. The Director will be assisted by professional and general support staff appointed in accordance with the rules and procedures governing United Nations staff appointments.

4. The Director shall have the responsibility for the organization, direction and administration of the Institute. In accordance with the policies laid down by the Governing Council, the Director shall:

(a) Submit the programme and budget of the Institute to the Governing Council for approval;

(b) Carry out programmes and effect disbursements as provided for in the budget through which funds have been allocated;

(c) Submit annual reports on the activities of the Institute to the Governing Council, together with a complete report on revenue and expenditure for the preceding period;

(d) Submit the names of senior personnel for approval and appointment by the Secretary-General or the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, depending on the level of the posts to be encumbered;

(e) Select and appoint personnel of the Institute other than those referred to in subparagraph (d) above, after consultation with the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa;

(f) Make the necessary arrangements with other national and international organizations for the use of the services offered by the Institute, it being understood that arrangements with national organizations will be made with the approval of the Governments concerned.

Article VIII
Cooperation with the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa

The secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa shall, within the limits of its resources, assist the Institute in every possible way in order to facilitate its work. In particular, from time to time it shall provide the Institute with experienced staff to give lectures, assist in supervising research within the Institute's postgraduate training programmes and participate in workshops, seminars and policy dialogue.

Article IX
Financial resources and rules governing the financial management of the Institute

The Institute shall derive its finances from contributions made by African Governments and by the United Nations. The Institute may derive further resources in cash or in kind from the United Nations, its specialized agencies, other governmental organizations and institutions, and Governments and non-governmental organizations. Acceptance by the Institute of offers of such further assistance shall, in every case, be subject to the decision of the Chair of the Governing Council, in consultation with the Director of the Institute, in accordance with the basic aims of the Institute and the relevant provisions of the rules governing the financial management of the Institute. The Chair of the Governing Council shall report on the matter to the Council at its next session.

Draft resolution II
New strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of resolution 959 (LI) of 15 May 2018, in which the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development considered the new strategic directions of the Commission, as set out in the note by the Executive Secretary of the Commission entitled "New strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa: putting ideas into action for an empowered and transformed Africa",[3] and adopted the revised strategic framework and biennial programme plan for the period 2018–2019 for programme 15,[4]

Endorses the new strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa as set out in the note by the Executive Secretary of the Commission entitled "New strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa: putting ideas into action for an empowered and transformed Africa", which is annexed to the present resolution.

Annex

New strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa: putting ideas into action for an empowered and transformed Africa

A. Background

1. The year 2018 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of the Economic Commission for Africa. The occasion presents an opportunity to reflect on the contribution of the Commission, as a key player on the African institutional landscape, to the task of tackling the continent's development challenges. Over the past 60 years there have been substantial advances in addressing development challenges and as such priorities are shifting and new challenges are emerging for the continent. The anniversary of the Commission — a diamond jubilee — also offers an opportunity to take stock of the Commission's achievements and reposition itself to respond to the new and emerging challenges and continental priorities as well as aspirations of continental institutions and member States. The Secretary-General, in addition, is making collaboration with the African Union a priority, as well as the

[3] E/ECA/COE/37/14/Rev.1.
[4] E/ECA/COE/37/4/Rev.1.

need to link development priorities with issues of peace and security. This requires a rethink of the positioning of the Commission.

2. Realigning the activities of the Commission with the demands of the member States is an essential element of its success and relevance. In pursuit of its mandate, the Commission has periodically scanned the development environment and has instituted a range of organizational transformations and renewals to position itself to ensure that it remains relevant to the needs and aspirations of its member States and can respond to emerging needs and challenges. The last restructuring exercise, undertaken in 2013, refocused the programmes of the Commission to make them more responsive to the transformative agenda of Africa. Since 2013, however, there have been significant developments at the global and regional levels that warrant further reforms by the Commission to ensure that it can effectively implement its mandate and respond to the evolving needs of its member States. The new reform is proposed with this as the backdrop.

B. Rationale for strategic repositioning of the Commission

3. A decade after the global financial and economic crisis, Africa finds itself in a new macroeconomic environment. Countries that were attracting huge volumes of foreign direct investments are no longer doing so. Oil-rich African countries that benefited from rising oil prices have witnessed serious economic downturns. This macroeconomic environment is being further strained by shifts in the domestic policies of emerging economies such as China, which are rebalancing their sources of growth. African economic growth recovered in 2017 but the rate of growth is still far below the double-digit growth needed for structural transformation, poverty reduction and increased prosperity as envisioned in Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.[5]

4. The current patterns and quality of growth in the region are leaving large segments of the population trapped in poverty and vulnerability. The deep and persistent inequalities across the continent have economic, social and political consequences. In the long run, these elements run the risk of undermining economic growth, productivity and the development of markets and could create conditions for open conflict and social unrest, as the recent experience of some African countries, in particular those in North Africa, has shown with the Arab Spring. Increasingly, there is consensus regarding the urgent need to ensure that growth is accelerated, sustainable and inclusive.

5. In order for Africa to grow and evolve, it is imperative that it transform structurally and diversify its economies. The current merchandise export structure, dominated by raw and unprocessed commodities, is not conducive to the envisaged level of development. African countries must diversify their sources of growth to reduce the vulnerability of their economies to internal and external shocks.

6. If Africa is to attain the desired outcomes of both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, a major change in the understanding, treatment and creation of a growth-enhancing macroeconomic environment is required. This change must look at the interface with development beyond the narrow focus on stabilization and on growth and be conceived in an integrated multisectoral perspective.

7. Africa must strengthen its own resources to tackle the macroeconomic issues that are undermining more inclusive and sustainable growth. The continent's ability to deal with new and emerging challenges is predicated on its ability to stabilize and grow its economies, primarily by mobilizing its own resources. To meet this challenge, African Governments need to build robust governance systems to support

[5] General Assembly resolution 70/1.

effective public sector management, to mobilize domestic resources, to combat illicit financial flows, to reform tax policies, and build robust formal private sector actors.

8. If African countries are to thrive in the constantly changing and dynamic global environment, it is critical that they have a robust governance system in which the authority of the State is perceived as legitimate and there is predictability about how agents are expected to act. The presence of such a governance system would also make Africa an attractive continent in which people are happy to live, work and invest.

9. The role of the private sector in financing Africa's development will continue to grow. The private sector can provide innovative and efficient ways of delivering infrastructure and other solutions for the continent. Most important, by mobilizing private sector finance, Africa can raise the trillions of dollars needed to fast-track its development, by diversifying the economy and improving competitiveness. This will require the development of robust capital markets and the creation of an environment conducive to private sector development, in particular in the areas of land, agriculture, energy, services and other infrastructure sectors. By leveraging the private sector, Africa can shift the production frontier for both goods and services, create sustainable economies, generate additional jobs and reap the continent's demographic dividend.

10. Poverty and inequality, however measured, remain very high in most parts of the continent. Accelerating the pace of poverty reduction and narrowing the persistent inequalities across the continent will contribute to social and political stability, economic growth, higher levels of productivity and improved living standards. Increasingly, there is an urgent need to ensure that public policies in Africa are more inclusive and respond to the needs of the vulnerable, including young people and women.

11. The commitment of African Governments to the regional integration agenda and, more broadly, to accelerated economic integration through, among other measures, the creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area and the Action Plan for Boosting Intra-African Trade, is at a scale sufficient to attract the private sector. These initiatives are complemented by other continental flagship programmes and strategies, including the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme, the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, the Action Plan for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa and the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa. Together these provide critical frameworks to attract and leverage private sector investment, optimize economic production and close the productivity gaps in African economies.

12. Climate change, environment and natural resources management are critical leverage points for the continent for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. Attainment of many of the Goals is directly or indirectly linked to the sustainable management of natural resources for healthy ecosystems, healthy economies and healthy societies. Africa is faced with serious challenges posed by climate change to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Africa must effectively integrate mitigation and adaptation to climate change into development policy planning processes. This is imperative to reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience to impacts. Moving forward with the implementation of the intended nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement [6] would enable African countries to reduce their future emissions and to contribute to global collective efforts to tackle the effects of climate change. By harnessing natural resource endowments, new technologies and infrastructure as a means of creating wealth, reversing resource depletion for Africa's development and as a conduit

[6] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

towards diversifying its economies, African countries also need to pursue policy reforms to foster a green economy while contributing to balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

13. Data and statistics are central to the development process. There is consensus on the development aspirations that should be pursued by Africa, as captured in the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In implementing and monitoring the two integrated agendas, there is need for an effective data policy regime and architecture to support the process. An African data revolution that constitutes the lifeblood of policymaking, planning and follow-up, and review of the two agendas will require resources and strengthened capacities for data collection, storage, access and analysis grounded in robust statistical systems.

14. The contribution of the Commission to the task of carrying forward the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 is centred on the three core facets of the Commission, namely, its convening function, its function as a think tank and its operational function, as articulated below:

(a) *Convening function*: providing dedicated regional intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder platforms with strong ownership by member States, regional bodies and development banks that result in agreed development policy frameworks, standards and action plans and that reinforce multilateralism at the regional and subregional levels;

(b) *Think-tank function*: conducting multisectoral research and analyses that nurture the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development and promote peer learning, innovative thinking and the advocacy of public policies, while fostering intersectoral linkages and synergies;

(c) *Operational function*: provision of policy advice at the country level through direct demand-based support to member States in areas related to its normative and analytical work and in collaboration with the United Nations system at the country level.

C. Review process

15. Based on the foregoing analysis, and with due consideration for the development context shaping the region and the Commission's key mandates, the Commission, under the leadership of its new Executive Secretary, embarked upon a process of reflection, consultation and forward thinking in September 2017. To that end, several strategic reviews have been undertaken with a view to reorienting the Commission to effectively support implementation of and follow-up to the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,[7] Agenda 2063, the new United Nations–African Union framework for the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and the Joint United Nations–African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security.

16. A series of consultations have also been conducted with stakeholders, including Heads of State and Government, ministers of finance and planning, ministers for foreign affairs, African ambassadors in Addis Ababa, partner organizations, including the African Union and the African Development Bank, bilateral partners and Commission staff members. The outcome of the process of reflection and consultations pointed to the need to reorient the strategic direction of the Commission with a view to taking advantage of opportunities, addressing the development challenges faced by Africa, responding to the needs of member States and effectively implementing the mandates of the Commission.

[7] General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.

D. Putting ideas into action for an empowered and transformed Africa

17. The emerging vision of the Commission is framed around delivering ideas and actions for an empowered, inclusive and transformed Africa and is informed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union. The three core facets of the Commission are its function as a think tank, its convening function and its operational function.

18. The overall objective of the Commission is to support the continent to effectively confront one of its central challenges: jobs creation. With more than half the jobs on the continent in the informal sector, that challenge has particular significance in fiscal terms and in terms of levels of poverty.

19. To deliver on its vision, the Commission will concentrate on five strategic directions:

(a) Advancing the position of the Commission as a premier knowledge institution by strengthening the knowledge profile of the staff;

(b) Developing macroeconomic and structural policy options to accelerate economic diversification and job creation;

(c) Designing and implementing innovative financing models for infrastructure and human, physical and social assets for transforming Africa;

(d) Contributing solutions to regional and transboundary challenges, with a focus on peace, security and social inclusion as an important development nexus;

(e) Advocating Africa's position at the global level and developing regional responses as a contribution to global governance issues.

20. The strategic directions will be implemented through the divisions of the Commission on the basis of its programmes. In its work, the Commission plans to move beyond merely focusing on the public sector, but actively to bring into its working modalities and efforts ideas and actions designed to deepen and grow the private sector, in particular the domestic private sector. This would be achieved by harnessing the private sector as the engine for driving production and productivity growth, jobs, and also as a provider of alternative means of financing development. The Commission will therefore deepen its collaboration with the private sector in support of policies on the appropriate enabling environment for that sector.

21. The Commission will also work with member States in both the normative and practical aspects of State-building through robust governance systems, which should include focusing more on issues of vulnerability, risks and capability in conflict and post-conflict countries with the aim of building their resilience and thereby preventing further crises.

22. In the light of the above aspirations, the subprogrammes of the Commission will be accordingly recalibrated, taking due account of the Commission's comparative advantages and programmatic priorities. The overall programme of work of the Commission, the tool for implementing the strategic directions, will therefore be organized around the following nine interdependent and complementary subprogrammes:

(a) *Macroeconomics and governance*. This subprogramme will be broadened to address economic governance matters as a critical aspect of economic development and is aimed at supporting African member States in their efforts to accelerate economic transformation and inclusive development;

(b) *Regional integration and trade*. This subprogramme will focus on the central role of achieving effective regional cooperation and economic integration

among member States by supporting efforts to deepen regional markets, boost intra-African trade, global trade, accelerate industrialization and tackle the challenges of structural transformation;

(c) *Private sector development and finance*. A successful private sector remains the main means of job creation, the biggest challenge of all Commission member States. The objective of this new subprogramme is to support member States in their endeavour to achieve accelerated job creation, sustained economic growth and transformation through leveraging the role and resources of the private sector with an emphasis on increasing private sector investment in agriculture and agribusiness, infrastructure, energy and services, promoting innovative financing solutions, developing capital markets, attracting investment and improving the business-enabling environment;

(d) *Data and statistics*. This subprogramme will continue its work on improving the production, dissemination and use of high-quality and comparable data and statistics in Africa to support evidence-based policymaking, planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting under the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The work of the subprogramme will also support countries in adopting new data technologies such as big data and innovative biometric techniques to help to accelerate decision-making on and measurement of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063;

(e) *Climate change, environment and natural resource management*. This subprogramme will play a vital role in supporting the efficient management of the continent's natural resource endowments, reducing the negative impacts of climate change by moving towards green transitions and climate-resilient development, and harnessing new technologies in the context of sustainable development;

(f) *Gender equality and women's empowerment*. This subprogramme will address emerging issues that have impacts on African women and girls and will also promote and support member States in their work to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment;

(g) *Subregional activities for development*. This subprogramme will be delivered through the five subregional offices covering Central, East, West, North and Southern Africa, whose selected thematic areas of specialization will equip them to tackle more effectively the development challenges faced by member States in their respective subregions;

(h) *Economic development and planning*. This subprogramme will be strengthened to improve public sector management and development planning in support of the structural transformation of member States;

(i) *Poverty, inequality and social policy*. The focus of this subprogramme will be sharpened to contribute to achieving inclusive and equitable sustainable human and social development in Africa.

23. The modalities for implementation will be aligned with the role of the Commission as a policy think tank engaged in multisectoral policy research and analysis with a view to harnessing the three pillars of sustainable development; as a convenor of intergovernmental platforms and forums such as the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, for the exchange of solutions, promotion of peer learning and articulation of a common African voice at the global level in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union; and as a provider of capacity development services, which include supporting member States in their efforts to comply with international agreements, treaties, norms and standards, through policy advocacy, consensus-building, technical support, policy advisory services and training measures.

24. The five subregional offices of the Commission will specialize in selected thematic areas relevant to their subregions and based on the demand of member States to ensure a more effective approach to priority issues of concern and development challenges faced by member States in their respective subregions. The capacity and resources of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning will be further strengthened in order to provide the necessary training and policy support for the implementation by member States of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

E. Programme-related changes

25. The following programme-related changes will be instituted:

(a) *Subprogramme 1*. The previous focus on macroeconomic policy is to be broadened to include economic governance matters and support to the African Peer Review Mechanism, which was previously under the capacity development subprogramme. The finance and private sector work previously carried out under this subprogramme is now moved to the new private sector development and finance subprogramme;

(b) *Subprogramme 2*. Thematic areas such as infrastructure, food security and agriculture, and land governance are consolidated within the private sector development and finance subprogramme, while support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development,[8] which was previously under the capacity development subprogramme is now added to the subprogramme portfolio;

(c) *Subprogramme 3*. A new subprogramme 3 on private sector development and finance is introduced. The objective of this new subprogramme is to support member States in achieving accelerated job creation, sustained economic growth and transformation by leveraging the role and resources of the private sector with an emphasis on increasing private sector investment in agriculture and agribusiness, infrastructure, energy and services, promoting innovative financing solutions, developing capital markets, attracting investment and improving the business-enabling environment;

(d) *Subprogramme 4*. The title of the subprogramme is changed to "data and statistics" while its scope remains unchanged;

(e) *Subprogramme 5*. The title of the previous subprogramme 3 is changed from "innovations, technologies and management of Africa's natural resources" to "climate change, environment and natural resource management" and the subprogramme is repositioned as subprogramme 5. The focus on innovations and technologies as facilitators of development will be recalibrated to support all programmatic areas. The previous capacity development subprogramme 5 is no longer a stand-alone subprogramme. The same functions were also being carried out by all other subprogrammes. The capacity development work of the Commission will be substantively mainstreamed as a core function across all subprogrammes, for efficiency, better ownership, and improving the capacity of the Commission to deliver knowledge through policy dialogue, advisory services and technical assistance under a unique vehicle;

(f) *Subprogramme 6*. The title "gender and women in development" is slightly modified to respond to shifting priorities as "gender equality and women's empowerment" while the scope of the subprogramme remains unchanged;

[8] A/57/304, annex.

(g) *Subprogramme 7*. The five components of subprogramme 7 on subregional activities for development will be enhanced to cover selected thematic areas in line with subregional priorities of member States and competencies of the Commission;

(h) *Subprogramme 8*. The subprogramme title "development planning and administration" is slightly modified as "economic development and planning" while the scope of the subprogramme remains unchanged;

(i) *Subprogramme 9*. The subprogramme on social development policy will be augmented and will cover social policy as previously, but will also include a special focus on poverty and inequality.

F. Conclusion and way forward

26. The repositioning of the Commission is being undertaken in response to changing global and regional dynamics, including the new macroeconomic environment in Africa, global and continental development frameworks and United Nations reforms. The proposed strategic directions and programmatic priorities laid out in the present note are the outcome of extensive consultations with a broad array of stakeholders, including the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the African Union Commission and the private sector, among others.

27. The implementation of the proposals will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Economic Commission for Africa in serving the rest of the United Nations family, member States and regional institutions. It will also enable the Commission to fully align with the Secretary General's reforms of the Secretariat and the Secretary-General's emphasis on collaboration with the United Nations. It should enable the Commission to align with and serve the continent and member States more expeditiously by leveraging more effectively internal synergies and by putting ideas into action for an empowered and transformed Africa.

Draft resolution III
Venue of the fifty-second session of the Economic Commission for Africa

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of decision A (LI) of 15 May 2018 adopted by the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, by which the Conference decided to hold its fifty-second session in Morocco in 2019,

Endorses the decision of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to hold its fifty-second session in Morocco in 2019.

C. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

3. At its seventy-fourth session, held in Bangkok from 11 to 16 May 2018, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific adopted resolution 74/5, on the basis of which the following draft resolution is submitted for action by the Economic and Social Council:

Draft resolution
Transition of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture to an intergovernmental organization outside the United Nations system

The Economic and Social Council,

Noting the adoption by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-fourth session, held in Bangkok from 11 to 16 May 2018, of resolution 74/5 of 16 May 2018, in which the Commission, inter alia, noted with appreciation the announcement by the Government of Indonesia that it would lead and support the transition of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture to a new intergovernmental organization outside the United Nations system, as well as the offer of other members of the Governing Council of the Centre to join Indonesia to support the transition process,

Approves the transformation of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture from a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to a new organization outside the United Nations system, as set out in Commission resolution 74/5, which is annexed to the present resolution.

Annex

Resolution 74/5
Transition of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture to an intergovernmental organization outside the United Nations system

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolutions 174 (XXXIII) of 29 April 1977 and 220 (XXXVIII) of 1 April 1982 on the establishment of the Regional Coordination Centre for Research and Development of Coarse Grains, Pulses, Roots and Tuber Crops in the Humid Tropics of Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling also its resolutions 60/5 of 28 April 2004, 61/5 of 18 May 2005 and 65/4 of 29 April 2009 on the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling further the agreement between the Government of Indonesia and the United Nations regarding the hosting of the Centre, signed on 29 April 1981,

Recalling the support of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its sixty-sixth session, based on the recommendation of the Governing Council of the Centre, for the change of name from the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific to the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture,

Recalling also its resolution 72/1 of 19 May 2016 on the revision of the statute of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture,

Acknowledging that the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture has continued to contribute to the economic and social development of Asia-Pacific countries by acting as a regional knowledge and training hub for increasing agricultural production, enhancing food security and improving rural livelihood, as well as by providing a forum for policy dialogue, South-South technical cooperation and mutual learning in these areas,

Acknowledging with appreciation the financial resources and facilities that have been provided by the Government of Indonesia to the Centre, as well as the support of other members and associate members,

Having considered the report of the Governing Council of the Centre on its fourteenth session,[9] in which the Council comprehensively reviewed the Centre's administrative and financial status and considered options for the Centre's future and the continuation of its operations, including by enhancing ownership of the Centre by its members,

1. *Endorses* the report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture on its fourteenth session;[9]

2. *Notes with appreciation* the announcement by the Government of Indonesia that it would lead and support the transition of the Centre to a new intergovernmental organization outside the United Nations system, as well as the offer of other Governing Council members to join Indonesia to support the transition process;

3. *Encourages* all members and associate members to support the new organization in shaping its objectives, programmes and activities;

4. *Encourages* all members, associate members and other relevant stakeholders to support the new organization, including by, but not limited to, providing voluntary financial and in-kind contributions;

5. *Notes* the recommendation of the Governing Council of the Centre that the new organization may report to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on its activities;

6. *Also notes* the intention of the Government of Indonesia to establish a transition task force;

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To take all the necessary administrative and legal steps, as appropriate, by 30 June 2018, to assist the Centre in transforming from a subsidiary body of the Commission to a new organization;

(b) To cooperate with the new organization, and to sustain the partnership, as appropriate;

(c) To take measures to transfer unspent voluntary funding to the new organization, subject to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations;[10]

(d) To reflect the changes emanating from the above decisions in her report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session, in 2019, on the midpoint review of the conference structure;

(e) To report to the Commission at its seventy-sixth session on progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

[9] ESCAP/74/13.
[10] ST/SGB/2013/4.

II. Matters brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council

A. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

4. At its thirty-seventh session, held in Havana from 7 to 11 May 2018, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean adopted a number of resolutions relating to its programme of work, summaries of which are set out below for the attention of the Economic and Social Council.

Resolution 717 (XXXVII)
Havana Resolution

5. The Commission, having reviewed the publication entitled *The Inefficiency of Inequality*, which complements the publications comprising the "trilogy of equality", took note of it and welcomed the integrated approach to development that had marked the thinking of the Commission since its inception.

6. The Commission instructed the secretariat to conduct studies and formulate public policy proposals in the countries, in close cooperation with their policymakers, with a view to building national economic and social development capacities.

Resolution 718 (XXXVII)
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean calendar of conferences for the period 2019–2020

7. The Commission reaffirmed the decision to maintain the current intergovernmental structure and the existing pattern of meetings and approved its calendar of conferences for the period 2019–2020. It reaffirmed that its current conference servicing system had proved to be efficient in substantive and organizational terms as well as cost-effective. It also reaffirmed the importance of the Commission continuing to be entrusted with the task of organizing and holding regional and subregional meetings to prepare for and follow up on world conferences of the United Nations in the economic, social and sustainable development fields.

Resolution 719 (XXXVII)
Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean

8. The Commission reaffirmed the commitment of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean to mainstream a transformative gender perspective in all the Sustainable Development Goals. It recommended the redoubling of efforts to ensure that the indicators for monitoring the Goals reflected the inequalities between men and women and could be used to design effective public policies for overcoming such inequalities.

9. The Commission called for active participation in the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference, to be held in Chile in 2019. It recommended that the delegations promote gender balance in their composition and requested that every effort be made to ensure the involvement of civil society.

10. The Commission took note of the efforts made by Governments to create a regional fund in benefit of women's and feminist organizations and movements.

Resolution 720 (XXXVII)
Support for the work of the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning

11. The Commission expressed its conviction that the policies adopted by States should be geared towards long-term aims and afford increasing attention to building visions for the future, centred on reducing inequalities, promoting the prosperity of their peoples and furthering sustainable development. It acknowledged the importance of public management and planning for development as instruments to carry forward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the region. The Commission reiterated the recommendation that the Institute should strengthen its capacity as the body responsible for training within the Commission and should step up the activities it conducted in that area in collaboration with the subregional headquarters and divisions of the Commission and other international institutions.

Resolution 721 (XXXVII)
Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

12. The Commission reiterated the importance of the increasing consolidation of its Statistical Conference of the Americas as the intergovernmental body that coordinated regional and international statistical activities in Latin America and the Caribbean and fostered the strengthening of national statistical offices and national statistical systems of the countries of the region. The Commission expressed its support for the Statistical Conference of the Americas as the appropriate intergovernmental body to create the regional framework of indicators for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals in Latin America and the Caribbean, to foster the integration of statistical and geospatial information and to channel cooperation activities for strengthening the statistical capacities of the countries of the region for the statistical monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the region.

Resolution 722 (XXXVII)
Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

13. The Commission recognized that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a universal and inclusive action plan based on the three dimensions of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental — whose goals and targets were indivisible, and that the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean was one of the platforms in which to enhance synergies and pool efforts among the various stakeholders in sustainable development with a focus on the social dimension of sustainable development. It requested the secretariat, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, to support the Latin American and Caribbean countries, including small island developing States, in their efforts to develop new methodologies and instruments for measuring multidimensional poverty, deprivations and vulnerability, as well as strengthening existing ones. The Commission urged that further analysis be conducted on the challenges related to the sustainability of the financing needed to close gaps in access to comprehensive social protection systems and universal social services.

Resolution 723 (XXXVII)
Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

14. The Commission renewed its commitment to implementing and monitoring the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development and recognized the

contribution of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean to the global follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014.

15. The Commission requested the secretariat, in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration and other relevant United Nations agencies, within the framework of their mandates, to support the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, upon request and in accordance with their national priorities, in following up the Intergovernmental Conference on International Migration, to be held in Morocco in December 2018, and looked forward to its possible outcomes.

Resolution 724 (XXXVII)
Conference on Science, Innovation and Information and Communications Technologies of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

16. The Commission welcomed the discussions held at the first meetings of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, on the impact of artificial intelligence on accelerated technological change in sustainable development and upcoming discussions on this topic. It looked forward to the rapid operationalization of the United Nations online platform as a gateway for information on existing science, technology and innovation initiatives, mechanisms and programmes.

Resolution 725 (XXXVII)
Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean

17. The Commission took note of the adoption of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted in Escazú, Costa Rica, which constituted an important step forward towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and invited all Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean to consider becoming parties to of the Agreement.

Resolution 727 (XXXVII)
Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee

18. The Commission welcomed the convening of the Caribbean Development Roundtable on a biennial basis. It reaffirmed the key role of the Commission, in particular through its subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, in coordinating development support for the subregion, in collaboration with the United Nations system and through direct engagement with Caribbean development partners. The Commission welcomed the role that it was mandated to play in incorporating the needs of the small island developing States in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and urged the Executive Secretary to employ all measures necessary to ensure the full implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee at its twenty-seventh session, the recommendations formulated by the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee at its eighteenth meeting and the conclusions reached at the fifth meeting of the Caribbean Development Roundtable.

Resolution 728 (XXXVII)
Programme of work and priorities of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean for 2020

19. The Commission adopted its programme of work for 2020 and welcomed the fact that it reflected the alignment and adaptation of activities, contents and modalities of the programme of work to the new requirements arising from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets, as well as from internationally agreed action plans and instruments.

20. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to submit the proposed budget for implementing the activities described in the programme of work to the relevant United Nations bodies for their consideration. It expressed its concern about the recent decline in the budgetary resources allocated to it to carry out the activities set forth in the programme of work.

21. The Commission noted with satisfaction the report prepared by the secretariat on the activities of the Commission from January 2016 to December 2017 and underlined the wide-ranging outcomes that the Commission had achieved in the different areas of work, commending especially its results-based approach and capacity to respond to the needs of the region. It welcomed the efforts made by the Executive Secretary to strengthen accountability and evaluation. The Commission decided that the Committee of the Whole was the appropriate body to review and adopt the annual programme of work of the Commission system in the years falling between years in which the Commission sessions were held. It encouraged the Executive Secretary to continue the practice of convening the Committee of the Whole in the intervals between Commission sessions.

Resolution 729 (XXXVII)
Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean

22. The Commission, recognizing that the digital economy formed a crucial component of progressive structural change aimed at increasing the relative share of knowledge-intensive production activities in the economy, enhancing competitiveness and making progress towards social inclusion and the reduction of inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean, and stressing the urgent need for capacity-building to create, share and utilize digital technologies to benefit from the new digital revolution, took note of the Cartagena de Indias Declaration and the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean adopted at the sixth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean. It urged regional and international bodies and agencies working in the area of policies on information and communications technologies to play an active part in the implementation of the Digital Agenda.

23. The Commission commended the joint efforts made by member States to strengthen regional collaboration on the information society with a view to identifying the advances achieved by Latin America and the Caribbean in the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. It recognized the importance of universal access to information and communications technologies, as well as of infrastructure, including broadband connection, for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and affirmed the need to promote public policies for that purpose. The Commission requested the secretariat to continue to work with the countries of the region in the implementation of and follow-up to decisions adopted at the sixth Ministerial Conference, especially with regard to the advisability and feasibility of advancing an agenda for the development of a regional digital market in close cooperation with stakeholders.

Resolution 730 (XXXVII)
Committee on South-South Cooperation

24. The Commission requested the secretariat of the Commission to continue to support the Governments of the region in the design of methodologies to follow up on South-South cooperation. It recognized that the United Nations system was the multilateral forum par excellence in which to contribute to the redefinition of the way that development was measured. The Commission invited the countries to participate, with the support of the secretariat, in the calculation of structural gaps, as a valuable tool for helping to measure and visualize development levels in each country beyond per capita income.

25. The Commission welcomed the proposal to create a network for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the objective of strengthening the institutional and technical capacities of the Governments of the region engaged in establishing or seeking to establish national mechanisms for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and follow-up to the 17 Goals.

26. The Commission invited the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation to consider convening a regional interactive dialogue on the priorities of the region, at United Nations Headquarters in New York on a date to be agreed, with a view to preparing for the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, to be held in Buenos Aires from 20 to 22 March 2019. It requested the Committee, in its capacity as a subsidiary body of the Commission, to report to the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development on its contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Resolution 731 (XXXVII)
Seventieth anniversary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

27. The Commission reaffirmed the important contributions to the region made by its subsidiary bodies in the areas of gender equality, cooperation and development, planning, statistics, population, science and technology, South-South cooperation and social development, among others. It also reaffirmed the role of the Commission as an essential component of the United Nations development system and recognized that the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, as a regional mechanism to follow up on and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, had become an example of regional coordination of multiple stakeholders to implement the 2030 Agenda.

28. The Commission commended the work carried out during its 70 years of existence and its continued efforts to support country-led processes. It committed itself to ensuring that its functions and mandate were fully recognized and maintained, in particular its crucial role in the regional dimension of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Commission urged full engagement in the initiative of the Secretary-General to revamp the regional assets in the interest of country-led processes and to increase, within its mandate, regional initiatives so that no one was left behind.

Resolution 732 (XXXVII)
Review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024

29. The Commission reiterated its invitation to member States to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 into their national and sectoral development strategies at the national and regional levels, as well as its invitation to regional and subregional organizations to integrate the Vienna Programme of Action into their relevant programmes of work and to provide technical and financial support for its implementation. It once again encouraged the private sector to contribute to the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, including through transparent, effective and accountable public-private partnerships.

30. The Commission requested the secretariat to support the regional review by landlocked and transit countries in Latin America in the framework of the midterm comprehensive review, in collaboration with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and relevant regional actors, through the preparation of analytical studies, and the organization of the regional meeting before December 2019 at the latest. It called upon the secretariat to continue to provide technical support to the landlocked developing countries of the region in areas related to the Vienna Programme of Action, such as infrastructure investment, transport facilitation, logistical integration and logistics cost studies.

Resolution 733 (XXXVII)
Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation trust fund

31. The Commission welcomed the establishment of a multi-donor trust fund for the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation as an instrument of financing for development that combined South-South and triangular cooperation for mutual benefit and for the common goal of development. It acknowledged the voluntary contributions made thus far and encouraged other States members of the Forum to make additional voluntary contributions to the fund so as to make it possible for the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to carry out further initiatives aimed at enhancing biregional cooperation between Latin America and the Caribbean and East Asia.

32. The Commission reaffirmed its commitment to carrying out with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific interregional projects financed through the trust fund aimed at enhancing biregional cooperation between Latin America and the Caribbean and East Asia and contributing to the development of both regions in the areas agreed by the Trust Fund Steering Committee.

B. Economic Commission for Africa

33. At the fifty-first session of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, held in Addis Ababa from 11 to 15 May 2018, the Commission adopted a ministerial statement on the theme "African Continental Free Trade Area: fiscal space for jobs and economic diversification". It also adopted a number of resolutions relating to its programme of work, summaries of which are set out below for the attention of the Economic and Social Council.

Resolution 957 (LI)
Review of the intergovernmental structure of the Economic Commission for Africa

34. The Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development recalled its resolution 908 (XLVI) of 2013 on refocusing and recalibrating the Commission to support Africa's structural transformation, as well as its resolution 943 (XLIX) of 2016, in which it had requested the Executive Secretary to undertake a review of the intergovernmental structure of the Commission and commended the efforts of the Executive Secretary to facilitate an effective process of consultation on the comprehensive review exercise.

35. The Conference of Ministers decided to grant additional time to the secretariat to conduct a further review and analysis of the intergovernmental structure of the Commission and requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference at its next session on restructuring the Conference and the subsidiary bodies of the Commission, including the intergovernmental committees of experts.

Resolution 958 (LI)
Implementation of international migration programmes in Africa

36. The Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, requested the Commission to continue to work with the African Union and other stakeholders on policy research, regional dialogue and capacity development with regard to migration issues, in particular in creating a positive narrative and developing strategies to harness it for regional development. It also requested the Commission, in partnership with the African Union, to continue to provide support and advice to member States on mainstreaming migration policies into their national development plans and strategies and to track and monitor the progress made in implementing migration programmes in Africa through various means, including by convening periodic conferences.

37. The Conference of Ministers called upon the Commission, through its regional and subregional offices, to address the critical areas concerning migration, including sustainable development, thereby providing frameworks for action by member States, the private sector and civil society.

Resolution 960 (LI)
Harnessing the potential of the African Continental Free Trade Area and creating fiscal space for jobs and economic diversification

38. The Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development requested the Commission to work in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the African Capacity-building Foundation, the African Development Bank and the regional economic communities, and other continental institutions, to support the States members of the African Union in developing national strategies aimed at benefiting from the African Continental Free Trade Area that complement the broader trade policy of each State party to the agreement establishing the Free Trade Area and in identifying the key trade opportunities, current constraints and steps required to take full advantage of the African market.

39. The Conference of Ministers also requested the Commission to support the States members of the African Union in enhancing their fiscal space and in mobilizing additional domestic resources through strengthening the tax administration, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending, tapping into private financing and improving the sustainability of borrowing.

40. In addition, the Conference requested the Commission and other development partners to support the mobilization of resources and promote investment to facilitate the harnessing of the full benefits of the Free Trade Area.

Resolution 961 (L!)
Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

41. The Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development decided to establish the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development under the auspices of the Commission to facilitate follow-up on and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to act as a multi-stakeholder forum at which matters relating to sustainable development and the structural transformation priorities of Africa could be discussed.

42. The Conference of Ministers also decided that the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development would be convened annually by the Chair of the Bureau of the Forum with the support of the secretariat of the Commission and that its meetings would be aligned with the schedules, programmes of work and themes of the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up and the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

43. In addition, the Conference of Ministers decided that the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development would take into consideration decisions relating to sustainable development taken by the African Union, including in connection with Agenda 2063.

C. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

44. At its seventy-fourth session, held in Bangkok from 11 to 16 May 2018, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific adopted a number of resolutions relating to its programme of work, summaries of which are set out below for the attention of the Economic and Social Council.

Resolution 74/1
Supporting the smooth transition of the least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific towards a sustainable graduation

45. The Commission recognized that the graduation process of least developed countries should be coupled with an appropriate package of incentives and support measures in order not to jeopardize their development process. It invited graduating countries from the Asian and Pacific region to start the preparations for their graduation and transition strategy and invited the United Nations system to extend the necessary support in that regard. The Commission also invited the international community and development partners to continue to support graduating least developed countries and to avoid any abrupt reductions in financial and technical assistance.

46. The Commission expressed serious concern about the decline in the share of expenditure for operational activities for development of the United Nations system in the least developed countries and invited the United Nations development system to continue to prioritize allocations to least developed countries.

47. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to encourage high-level policy dialogue among the least developed countries, inviting relevant development partners and organizations of the United Nations system to share experiences and lessons learned in the context of a smooth transition and sustainable graduation. It also requested the Executive Secretary to provide targeted assistance to graduating

countries to support the formulation and implementation of smooth national transition strategies towards sustainable graduation. In addition, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to carry out before 2020 a needs assessment on how to support the least developed countries of the Asia-Pacific region in their graduation and smooth transition.

Resolution 74/2
Promotion of the regional framework for the planning, design, development and operations of dry ports of international importance

48. The Commission took note of the regional framework for the planning, design, development and operation of dry ports of international importance, recognized its potential for assisting member countries in facilitating the development of regional connectivity and encouraged member States that had not already done so to consider becoming parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports.

49. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to accord priority to the promotion of the regional framework by assisting members of the Commission in their efforts to realize the vision of a sustainable integrated intermodal transport and logistics system. It also requested the Executive Secretary to encourage effective coordination among all actors while promoting the regional framework, facilitate the sharing of experiences and good practices and mobilize further financial and technical support to the wider development of dry ports of international importance.

Resolution 74/3
Improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific for sustainable transport systems

50. The Commission noted the role of the United Nations legal instruments on road safety in facilitating road safety at the global, regional and national levels. It encouraged all members to intensify national efforts and regional collaboration with a view to meeting the road safety-related targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and to take steps to improve road safety.

51. The Commission invited member States to develop and implement national road safety plans and to continue to implement professional driver qualification frameworks.

52. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to continue to support the implementation of the Decade of Action for Road Safety and the 2030 Agenda targets related to road safety and to continue to monitor the progress made in meeting the updated Regional Road Safety Goals, Targets and Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2016–2020.

Resolution 74/4
Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2017

53. The Commission endorsed the Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2017 and invited member States to follow up on and implement it.

54. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to accord priority to the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration and to seek cooperation from and ensure coordination with the United Nations system.

Resolution 74/6
Advancing disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific

55. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to continue to support the development of disaster-related statistics and to continue to accord priority to coordination with other national and international institutions in order to help to ensure alignment with internationally agreed development goals and to continue to foster cooperation and synergies among relevant initiatives on statistical development and geospatial information management. The Commission also requested the Executive Secretary to support the preparation of a joint report by the Secretary-General, the Commission, the Economic Commission for Europe and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, pursuant to decision 49/113 of the Statistical Commission, taking into consideration the work of the Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific.

Resolution 74/7
Towards disability-inclusive sustainable development: implementation of the Beijing Declaration on Disability-inclusive Development, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific

56. The Commission endorsed the Beijing Declaration on Disability-inclusive Development, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific". It committed to utilizing the Incheon Strategy and the Beijing Declaration as a unique set of tools to support the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; The Commission invited members to follow up on and implement the Beijing Declaration.

57. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to accord priority to supporting members in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Incheon Strategy. It also requested the Executive Secretary to continue to provide technical assistance to its members in integrating disability perspectives and strengthening disability-inclusive development efforts in order to implement the 2030 Agenda.

Resolution 74/8
Accelerating the implementation of the Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific

58. The Commission reiterated the commitment of members to the Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. It decided to convene a second Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific in 2020 to review the midterm progress in the implementation of the Regional Action Framework. The Commission encouraged members to further strengthen coordination, monitoring and knowledge-sharing to improve civil registration and vital statistics systems in their countries.

59. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to continue to support members in the implementation of the Regional Action Framework and to support the convening of a second Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific in 2020.

Resolution 74/9
Implementation of the outcomes of the Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum

60. The Commission endorsed the ministerial declaration on regional cooperation for energy transition towards sustainable and resilient societies in Asia and the

Pacific, adopted by the Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, and invited its members to follow up on and implement declaration.

61. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to accord priority to the implementation of the ministerial declaration and to seek cooperation from and ensure coordination with the United Nations system.

Resolution 74/10
Implementation of the ministerial declaration on enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific

62. The Commission endorsed the ministerial declaration on enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific.

63. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to accord priority to the implementation of the ministerial declaration and to continue to accord priority to enhancing economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific in the programme of work of the Commission and through its conference structure. It also requested the Executive Secretary to continue to support member State efforts with regard to regional economic cooperation and integration and to the convening of a third Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific in 2021.

Resolution 74/11
Strengthening regional cooperation to tackle inequality in all its forms in Asia and the Pacific

64. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary to continue to conduct deeper interdisciplinary research and data analysis in order to map the groups of people who were at risk of being left behind and to continue to analyse inequality trends comprehensively. It also requested the Executive Secretary to continue to provide its members with technical assistance and capacity-building activities on policies and programmes that addressed inequality and to support regional cooperation on policy coordination and the sharing of best practices and development experiences to address the issue of inequality in Asia and the Pacific. In addition, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to continue to cooperate with members to deepen regional cooperation and support relevant initiatives to reduce extreme poverty and tackle inequality.